

Donates Congressional Pay Raise to Local Charities

SCOTTSDALE - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today visited the Paz de Cristo Outreach Center in Mesa to examine how the current economic downturn is creating challenges for nonprofit and charitable organizations. At the event, Mitchell also announced the charities to which he will donate his Congressional pay raise.

"More and more people are in need of assistance right now, and the nonprofit organizations that provide help are more important than ever," Mitchell said. "Since I took office in 2007, I've maintained that discipline begins at home and Congress does not deserve a pay raise. With everyone across the board tightening their belts, I've been proud to donate my pay raise to charities and organizations like Paz de Cristo with the hope that it will improve life in our community."

Last year, Mitchell donated his 2008 Congressional pay raise to 10 local charities that reflected his priorities in Congress, his years of community service, and his personal life. This year, he will donate both his 2008 and 2009 Congressional pay raises to local charities. While there were many worthy charities from which to choose, Mitchell opted to divide his \$8,500 donation among 15 organizations. The five new recipients are:

[Paz de Cristo](#) . Paz de Cristo provides community service and justice-minded volunteers with an opportunity to directly serve people in need with a daily meal service, food boxes and empowerment programs. Each month, nearly 1,000 individuals from more than 60 faith communities, civic groups, businesses and schools work together to fulfill the Paz de Cristo mission.

[Sojourner Center](#) . Sojourner Center provides shelter and support services to thousands of individuals affected by domestic violence. As the nation's largest domestic violence shelter, Sojourner Center is a tireless advocate for domestic violence victims and survivors.

[Arizona Women's Education and Employment, Inc](#) . AWEE is a workforce development organization, offering a full range of evidence-based training and support services to women, men and their families by helping them reclaim their lives by moving from welfare to the workplace.

[St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance](#) . St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, the world's first food bank, is a non-sectarian, nonprofit organization that alleviates hunger by efficiently gathering and distributing food to sites that serve the hungry. Serving 13 of Arizona's 15 counties, the organization is committed to volunteerism, building community relationships and improving the quality of life for Arizonans in need.

[Friends of Tempe Center for the Arts](#) . Friends of Tempe Center for the Arts promotes the artistic activities of the Tempe Center for the Arts by supporting a system of funding through public, private and philanthropic sources to encourage and foster appreciation of the arts for future generations.

In addition, Mitchell will again donate to the ten charities he supported last year. They are:

[The Arizona Animal Welfare League](#) . The League is Arizona's largest and oldest "no-kill" animal shelter, co-founded in 1971 by Amanda Blake, who played Miss Kitty on TV's "Gunsmoke."

[The Arizona Chapter of Sentinels of Freedom](#) . The local chapter of this national veterans organization helps wounded soldiers restart their lives. Sentinels of Freedom scholarships have helped returning soldiers - with injuries such as amputations, blindness, deafness, paraplegia and burns - to pay mortgages, undergo physical rehabilitation and adjust to civilian life.

[Audubon of Arizona](#) . Started in 2002 under the leadership of former Scottsdale Mayor Sam Campana, Audubon Arizona has grown to be a premier conservation and environmental education program.

[Boys and Girls Club of Greater Scottsdale](#) . With nine branches in Scottsdale and the northeast Valley, the Club has served well over 100,000 children and teens with quality after-school and summer programs in a safe, supervised environment.

[Childsplay](#) . Childsplay is an award-winning professional theatre company for young audiences and families. Since 1977, Childsplay has achieved a national reputation in the field. Mitchell is

a longtime supporter of Childsplay and sits on its board of trustees.

[The East Valley Crisis Center](#) . The Center is committed to preventing child abuse and neglect, and its shelter and programs have aided and comforted nearly 12,000 children since 1981.

[Prostate Checkup All Sports Foundation](#) , aka prostatecheckup.com. Founded in 1998 by former football coach and prostate cancer survivor Gene Felker, this organization saves lives by educating and screening men for prostate cancer. Mitchell is also a prostate cancer survivor whose life was saved by a PSA blood test in 1999.

[Tempe Community Action Agency](#) . Headquartered in Tempe's Escalante Neighborhood, this nonprofit social service organization helps the working poor, seniors, the homeless and others in need achieve sufficiency.

[Tempe Impact Education Foundation](#) . Volunteers from TIE provide help to some of the neediest children in Tempe Elementary Schools, including clothing, musical instruments and scholarships. Mitchell and his wife, Marianne, taught in Tempe schools.

[Welcome to America Project](#) . This East Valley-based organization helps refugees from Africa and other war-torn and oppressed regions settle into their new lives with donations of furniture and household items.

Earlier this year, Rep. Mitchell introduced a bipartisan resolution, H.Res.244, supporting charitable giving. The resolution is currently pending before the House Ways and Means Committee.

Video from the Event:

